OCT 28 1988

VOLUME 22 • NUMBER 4 • PAGES 145-192 • OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1988

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TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

A Publication Concerned With Natural History and Conservation

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

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The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

– Founded 1879 –

President
W.K. (Bill) Gummer

Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on Club activities.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

Membership Fees: Individual (yearly) $20 Sustaining (yearly) $50
Family (yearly) $22 Life (one payment) $500
Subscriptions to Trail & Landscape (libraries and institutions) $20 per year (Volume)
Single copies of recent issues: $5.00 each postpaid.
Index to Volumes 1 - 20: $8.00 + $2.00 postage and handling.

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Second Class Mail – Registration #2777

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE©

Published by
The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club
Box 3264, Postal Station C
Ottawa K1Y 4J5

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from the Editor...

With few exceptions, all articles and poems submitted to *Trail & Landscape* are reviewed by an editor and at least one expert in the field. (Obvious exceptions are the reports of the bird counts and the seasonal Bird Sightings.) The review process varies from formal to informal depending on the circumstances and the wishes of the reviewers.

I am grateful to acknowledge the fine work of our reviewers, including the following people this year:

George Argus, Irwin Brodo, Paul Catling, Francis Cook, Stephen Darbyshire, Bruce Di Labio, Albert Dugal, Christine Hanrahan, Elizabeth Morton, Ron Pittaway, Allan Reddoch, and Stan van Zyll de Jong.

Many thanks to the Editorial Assistant, Business Manager, and Graphics and Production Staffs for their continued reliable work. Proofreading sessions take place in an activity room of the National Museum of Natural Sciences, for which we thank the Museum Director, Alan Emery. I especially appreciate the contributions of Judy and Peter Hall, who have sorted out and typed some almost unmanageable submissions, and who serve as impromptu proofreaders on occasion.

Over the years, *Trail & Landscape* has been produced on a minimum budget, thanks to the gifts of time and materials from many members. For example, we have never had to buy paper for either the proofreaders' copy or camera-ready copy thanks to the generosity of Harry Thomson and, more recently, Ed Tollefson.

You may have noticed that Bill Gummer's name has disappeared from the inside front cover as an Associate Editor. This is a temporary situation to give Bill time to continue his important involvement as President to the end of the year. Then, he will again have time to contribute his much-appreciated skills to this journal.

Trail & Landscape has been printed by Lomor Printers since 1978. I have enjoyed dealing with this firm through its president, Michael Love, the estimator, Roger O'Reilly, and other employees. When I go to examine the blueprint of each issue, I especially look forward to seeing the high-precision work of the cameraman, Richard Hamilton, who understands what ought to be done even when I don't spell it out.

My thanks to the members of the Club's Publications Committee, and to our readers and authors for their support.

Joyce M. Reddoch

About the New *Trail & Landscape* Covers

This year *Trail & Landscape* began life as a quarterly with four brand new covers. The covers are the work of Marc Guertin, who has found time in his busy life as a graphics artist to make this significant contribution to the Club.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Marc Guertin was born and grew up in Aylmer, Quebec, just upstream from Ottawa-Hull. After high school, he attended Studio 5316 in Montreal, where he received his diploma of the Canadian School of Commercial Art Course in 1966. His career as a commercial artist began in Ottawa, where he gained experience at several firms before founding his own company, Quorum Graphics Limited, in 1979. Marc is President and Art Director of the company.

Marc first volunteered his talents to *Trail & Landscape* in 1978, and his contributions have been widely appreciated by the editors and readers. His efforts were recognized by the Club last year when he was co-winner of the 1986 Service Award.

ABOUT THE COVERS

It was a real challenge to choose illustrations for the four new covers. We had to find subjects that represented the four seasons and at the same time reflected characteristic aspects of the landscape and natural history of the Ottawa District. The District is so varied and rich that we could probably continue producing new cover illustrations for the next 20 years - if we had the time!

Here are some background aspects that came to mind as we thought about each cover.

The cover illustration for the winter issue (number 1) shows a favourite spot of Marc's in Gatineau Park between the Gatineau Parkway and Chelsea Brook on the flats below Camp Fortune. Although the rock outcrop is Precambrian, the picture reminds Bill Gummer of a section of Stony Swamp along Trail #4 (where the rocks happen to be sedimentary). Either way, naturalists relate to this sunny, winter, woodland scene.

No flowers could be more appropriate for spring in the Ottawa District than White Trilliums. But the District has a special significance for the White Trillium because it is on the northern edge of the distribution of this species. In 1967 in *Trail & Landscape*, Anne and Gary Hanes reported their work in mapping the presence and absence of the White Trillium north of the Ottawa River. The northern boundary runs across the District about 30 km above the Ottawa River, except in the Gatineau Valley where they found plants almost up to Maniwaki.

The wetland pictured on the summer cover is one of my favourite places, an unusually rich, shoreline bog north of St-Francois-de-Masham in Quebec. The bog is the home of a large number of different butterflies, including the rare northern species, Bog Fritillary (*Proclossiana unomia*). This is one of only two locations presently known for it in the District, and the only location where it is regularly seen. The very local Bog Copper (*Epidemia epixanthe*) is quite numerous in this bog (P. Hall, personal communication).

Among the rare plants in the bog, at least three occur in the section pictured. In the foreground water grows the provincially rare Twin-scaped Bladderwort (*Utricularia geminiscapa*), and on the floating mats framing the mid-ground are plants of the regionally rare, pink-flowered Bog Aster (*Aster nemoralis*). Although this aster is quite characteristic of Laurentian shoreline bogs, it is rare in the Ottawa District. Among the Black Spruce trees to the right of the frame is a colony of the provincially rare White Fringed-orchid (*Platanthera blephariglottis*).

The cover of this autumn issue shows a Belted Kingfisher in the valley of Green's Creek at Innis Road in Gloucester. The waters of the local rivers and creeks are gradually freezing over, but a few kingfishers will sometimes linger into early winter. The Belted Kingfisher is a good bird to find for the Christmas Bird Count, and Allan and I were lucky enough to do that here several years ago. The banks of Green's Creek are significant for their rich deposits of fossils - clay nodules that preserve parts of animals and plants from 10,000 years ago. This fossil locality was described by Dick Harington in *Trail & Landscape* in 1983. The bridge over Green's Creek is being widened from two to six lanes as part of the Blackburn Hamlet - Innis Road bypass. This is only one example of where the recent massive development in the Ottawa area has caused encroachment on or obliteration of a favourite natural area. The Club and its members have their work cut out for them to ensure the continued survival of the few natural areas left.

Joyce M. Reddoch

Council Report

Barbara Campbell

Update on Alfred Bog

Good news! The Nature Conservancy of Canada has completed negotiations with Cobi Foods, who are the current owners of Hardee Farms Ltd., on the purchase of their land holdings in the Alfred Bog. This adds an additional 3800 acres to the already acquired 250 acres to form an area about one-third of the bog that will be protected. A fund-raising campaign will take place and we urge members to be generous! Our thanks go to Frank Pope, who has been instrumental in keeping discussions going.

Wildlife '87 Garden

The Wildlife '87 Garden project is still underway. Discussions are being carried out with City of Ottawa officials about a possible site at Britannia. This position looks hopeful.

Macoun Field Club

1988 marks the 40th anniversary year of the Macoun Field Club. Several special projects have taken place to mark this occasion, including a special anthology of *The Little Bear* and an historical scrapbook with photographs, documents and articles covering the last 40 years of the Macoun Field Club. Special thanks to to Maria Darragh for her efforts in assembling this collection. An anniversary party was held at the Victoria Memorial Building to which the Macoun Field Club members, their parents, past Macoun members and leaders were invited. There was a good turnout of about 100 people, and the event was a real success.

Paul Hamilton, Macoun Field Club leader, has decided to step down after being with the club since September 1986. His enthusiasm and energy will be missed. Thanks to Paul for a terrific job done. Members of the Macoun Field Club Committee will take turns in filling the position of leader to organize the Macoun Field Club's activities. This action is being taken to reduce the work load that otherwise falls mainly on one person.

Congratulations are in order to Macoun member David Manga, who received the 1988 Junior Conservationist Award given by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Club Display

The Club finally has a new display panel, thanks to the efforts of Barb Desrochers and Deirdre Furlong of the Education and Publicity Committee. The current display has already been shown at several functions including National Wildlife Week held in April at the National Museum of Natural Sciences.

Members of the Committee once again participated as judges at the Ottawa Regional Science Fair. This year's winner was Dereck Moores. Plans are also underway for this year's Fall Rhapsody program, organized by the National Capital Commission.

After much soul-searching, the Committee is trying to get itself going again by getting more people involved in helping to publicize the Club and its activities. Although the last few months have been very productive, the Committee still needs volunteers who are willing to be organizers. If you feel that you would like more information on this committee or might like to get involved, please call Jeff Harrison at 230-5968.

Publications

The Ottawa Citizen is publishing a book by Dan Brunton entitled *Nature and Natural Areas in Canada's Capital*. The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club will have joint copyright. This work deals with the natural history of the Ottawa area, written by one of Ottawa's best-known naturalists. It should be available soon at the Nature Canada Bookshop and through *The Ottawa Citizen*, and will be selling for about $10. Look for it!

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club is preparing to publish, as a special publication, a second edition of Dr. Irwin Brodo's book, *Lichens of the Ottawa Region*. The first edition was published by the National Museum of Natural Sciences in 1981. Although negotiations with the Museum are not yet complete, the project looks hopeful. Another one to watch out for!

The *Trail & Landscape* 20-year index has now been circulating for over six months and has certainly been invaluable to its users. Many thanks to Bill Gummer, who did a superb job in compiling the information and producing a very useful document.

After some discussion, *Trail & Landscape* now follows the pattern of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* and has become a quarterly. *Trail & Landscape* is also sporting new covers thanks to the artistry of Marc Guertin. *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* is making a money-saving change by reducing its page size slightly.

Peregrine Falcon Release Program

1988 was another successful year for the peregrine release program coordinated jointly by the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Club volunteers again played a valuable role in keeping track of peregrine activities after release; good records at this time add to the

success of the activity.

Other News

Admission and parking fees are now in effect at the National Museum of Natural Sciences, and this has led to some concern as to what happens when Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club members attend Club activities at the Museum. Parking costs must be paid in any case; however, when attending Club functions, members should show their OFNC membership cards to museum staff for admission to the building itself.

The need for an office for the Club still exists, and although a number of possibilities have come up in the last two months, still nothing concrete has happened or is likely to happen in the near future. The Club computer is currently housed in Museum property, but all our other files, books and records that are spread out throughout various homes still need a central space.

The Council has regretfully lost three of its strong members through resignations. These are Dan Brunton (Awards Chairman), Frank Valentine (Treasurer) and Paul Ward (past Treasurer).

The draft terms of reference have been reviewed by the special committee headed by Diana Laubitz and have been distributed to the various committees and officers for comments. This exercise should standardize the format for terms of reference and also ensure that each incoming committee chairman will receive an information package from the outgoing chairman to present some guidelines for the committee. ¤

Southern Arrow-wood, *Viburnum recognitum*, A Rare Ontario Species in the Ottawa District

Albert W. Dugal
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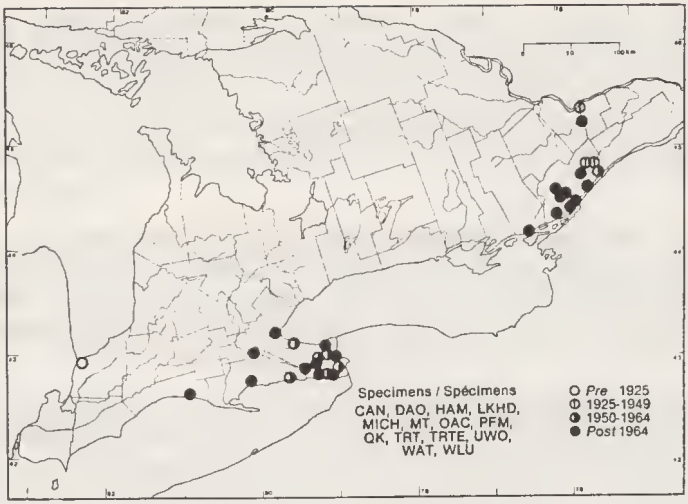
Southern Arrow-wood (*Viburnum recognitum*) is a member of the Honeysuckle family, the Caprifoliaceae. Under ideal conditions, this shrub can attain the height of five metres. It has coarsely-toothed, opposite leaves and clusters of small, creamy-white, unpleasantly-scented flowers which open in mid-June. By late August and early September, the mature berry-like fruits are dark blue or bluish-black in colour (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Southern Arrow-wood in flower (centre) and in fruit (upper left). Detail of the leaves at lower right.

Southern Arrow-wood usually grows in low, wet situations such as swampy woods or watercourse thickets where soils are often deep, black and organic in nature. Although widely distributed in the eastern United States (see Figure 2), in Canada this shrub is found only in southwestern New Brunswick, southern Quebec, and eastern and southern Ontario. At present, Southern Arrow-wood is considered to be a rare plant in Ontario (Keddy 1984).

Southern Arrow-wood was first discovered in the Ottawa District by G.G. Anderson in 1933 growing in "wet places, canal edge, Ottawa". Unfortunately, this vague description fails to pinpoint the site and only leads to speculation. Perhaps it was growing in Dow's Swamp (the habitat was certainly ideal) or anywhere along the canal that had swampy locales. It might even have been growing on the Central Experimental Farm grounds. This species was planted in the arboretum prior to 1895 (Macoun 1895).



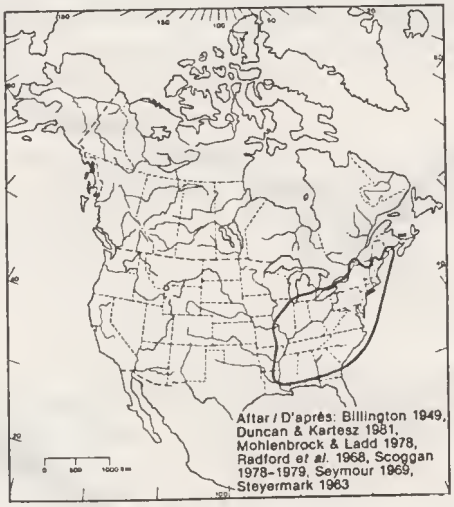

After / D'après: Billington 1949, Duncan & Kartesz 1981, Mohlenbrock & Ladd 1978, Radford et al. 1968, Scoggan 1978-1979, Seymour 1969, Steyermark 1963

Figure 2. Distribution of Southern Arrow-wood in Ontario and North America (Keddy 1984; used with the permission of the Rare and Endangered Plants Project, Botany Division, National Museum of Natural Sciences).

The next collection was made in 1970 by W.C. Kemp and T.C. Adams "6 miles south of Manotick Station, roadside fence". I believe this is the same site where Mike Shchepanek and I collected the plant in 1981 (see Figure 3). Here, a large colony straddles the Snake Island Road approximately eight kilometres southwest of Metcalfe. The plants are growing on deep, moist, black organic soil.

In 1984, Gerben Gazendam and I found a two-metre tall specimen growing in an area of old bog that was being invaded by aspen woodland. This site was approximately three kilometres southeast of the extensive Snake Island Road population and three kilometres west of the Springhill Cemetery.

1987 was a good year for new sightings of Southern Arrow-wood in Eastern Ontario. In July, Clarence and Enid Frankton discovered two non-fruiting plants near Bells Corners approximately 800 m south of the intersection of Knoxdale and Richmond Roads close to the powerlines. These shrubs were growing in damp soil over limestone substrate (D.F. Brunton, personal communication 1987). Also in July, Gerben Gazendam and I found a good number of mature specimens (up to three metres plus) growing along the banks of Kemptville Creek between Cranberry Lake and the paved road from Merrickville to North Augusta. These shrubs were growing in moist, deep, black organic soil.

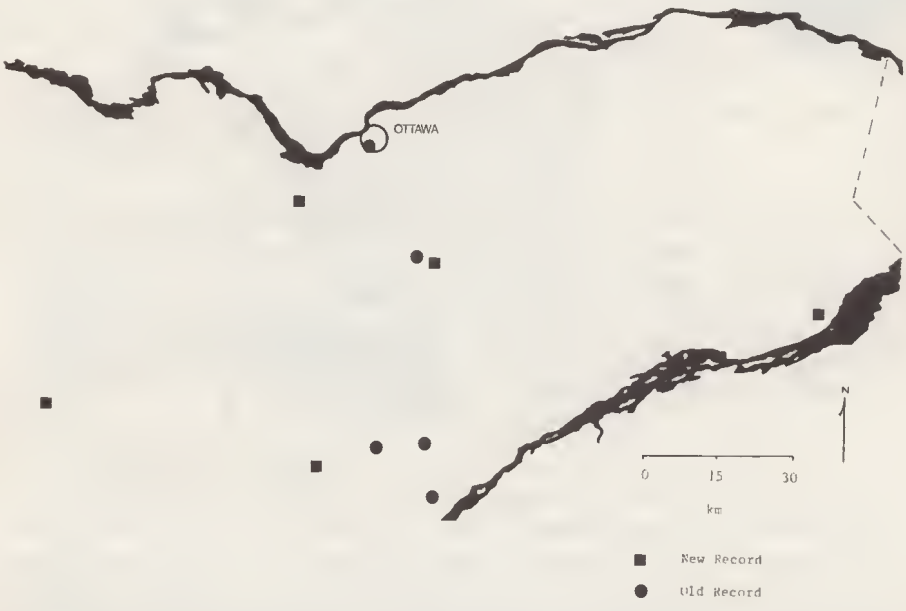


Figure 3. Distribution of Southern Arrow-wood in Eastern Ontario showing new records.

In early September, I noticed a record for Lanark County in a bouquet that Elizabeth Meyboom, a museum volunteer, had brought in from her farm. She had collected the branch from a shrub growing in mucky soil along Bolton Creek about 10 km southwest of Fallbrook. Needless to say, that particular part of the floral arrangement was rapidly transformed into an herbarium specimen.

Recently, while sorting some of Mike Shchepanek's and my 1976 collections from eastern Ontario, we noticed that we had gathered Southern Arrow-wood in Glengarry County 3.2 km north of Summerstown near Fraser Creek. This is the most easterly known record for this shrub in Ontario.

Several species of Viburnum have or may have coarsely-toothed leaves, resulting in confusion with Southern Arrow-wood. Rafinesque's Arrow-wood (*Viburnum rafinesquianum*), although very similar, differs in possessing stipules - small appendages on each side of the leaf stalk. It also prefers drier habitats. Occasionally, Arrow-wood (*V. acerifolium*) produces leaves which are not distinctly three-lobed, particularly beneath the flower cluster. The presence of stipules distinguishes this species from Southern Arrow-wood. Sometimes the leaves of summer shoots of the Hobblebush (*V. alnifolium*) can be narrowly ovate and coarsely-toothed (Gleason 1952, Soper & Heimburger 1982). Unlike Southern Arrow-wood, this is a low, sprawling shrub bearing leaves with an abundance of star-shaped hairs on their lower surfaces.

Many ideal habitats for Southern Arrow-wood exist in eastern Ontario. Undoubtedly, when this area is better explored by botanists and naturalists, more stands of this interesting shrub should be discovered.

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Soper, J.H. and M.L. Heimburger. 1982. Shrubs of Ontario. Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. 495 pp. ¤

A Key to the Viburnums of the Ottawa District

Albert W. Dugal
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Nine species of Viburnum occur within the Ottawa District, two of which are introduced, having escaped from cultivation. This represents only a small proportion of the approximately 225 species growing predominantly in the north temperate regions of the world, especially in east Asia.

The Viburnums belong to the Honeysuckle family, the Caprifoliaceae, and most are shrubs. However, a few species have individuals which develop into small trees. All have simple, opposite leaves which can have lobed, toothed or entire margins. While some species have two kinds of flowers in their inflorescences (flower clusters) - larger, sterile, marginal flowers and smaller, fertile, central ones - the majority bear inflorescences with similar, small, fertile flowers. The Viburnums produce clusters of one-seeded, berry-like fruits, some of which are edible. Many, including several of our native species, are cultivated.

In the Ottawa District, the Viburnums occupy a wide range of habitats, from dry, south-facing escarpments to wet, swampy woods. It is almost impossible to avoid an encounter with at least one species of Viburnum on an outing, especially in the spring and fall when their flowers and fruit are conspicuous. The clusters of white or creamy-white flowers gradually develop into bunches of mature fruits in various hues of red or black. A number of species, for example the Withe-rod, exhibit dramatic colour transitions as the fruit ripens (from green to shocking pink to blue-black).

The following key is extracted from Fernald (1950), Gleason (1952), Hinds (1986) and Soper and Heimburger (1982). The arrangement of the brief species descriptions varies somewhat from the key and provides a slightly different approach to Viburnum identification.

V. acerifolium

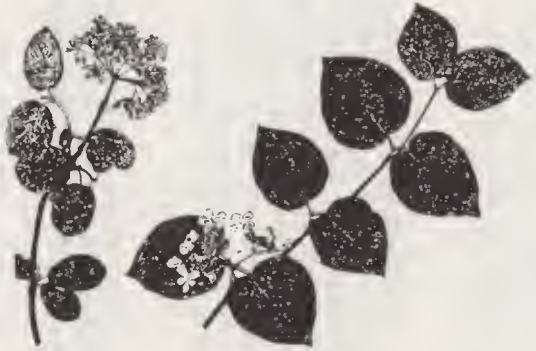
V. trilobum & V. opulus

V. cassinoides

V. lentago

V. recognitum

V. rafinesquianum



V. lantana

V. alnifolium

Inflorescences with Two Kinds of Flowers

Three of the nine species of Viburnum which occur in the Ottawa District have two kinds of flowers in their inflorescences - larger, sterile marginal flowers and smaller, fertile central ones. These include the **Hobblebush** (*Viburnum alnifolium*), the **Highbush-cranberry** (*V. trilobum*) and the **European Cranberry** (*V. opulus*).

The **Hobblebush** is a low (usually less than two metres in height), sprawling shrub bearing large, hairy, unlobed leaves. The rounded or heart-shaped leaf bases, are, with the exception of the Wayfaring Tree (*V. lantana*), quite distinct from the other species of Viburnums. The young twigs and winter buds are densely covered with light cinnamon brown, scurfy hairs. This is one of the earliest flowering of the Viburnums, blooming in late May and early June.

The native **Highbush-cranberry** and the introduced **European Cranberry** are tall (up to four metres), upright shrubs with three-lobed, maple-like leaves. Their young branches are smooth and gray to brownish-gray in colour. These two species are so similar that some botanists, me included, consider them to be varieties of a single species (*V. opulus*). The Highbush-cranberry has leaf stalks with broad, flat-bottomed grooves and convex-topped, more or less stalked glands. The leaf stalks of the European Cranberry have narrow, V-shaped grooves and concave-topped, sessile glands. Both species bloom from mid-June into July.

Inflorescences with All Flowers Alike

Inflorescences with one kind of flower - small and fertile - are found in the **Arrow-wood** (*V. acerifolium*), **Rafinesque's Arrow-wood** (*V. rafinesquianum*), **Southern Arrow-wood** (*V. recognitum*; see previous article), **Wayfaring Tree** (*V. lantana*), **Withe-rod** (*V. cassinoides*) and **Nannyberry** (*V. lentago*).

The **Arrow-wood** is the only one of these six species with lobed, maple-like leaves. The lower leaf surface is covered with clustered hairs and tiny, dark, resinous dots. It is a low shrub, usually less than two metres in height, which blooms in mid-June.

Rafinesque's Arrow-wood has coarsely-toothed leaves with bristle-like stipules and short leaf stalks. This small shrub rarely attains 1.5 metres in height and blooms in late May and

early June.

Southern Arrow-wood closely resembles Rafinesque's Arrow-wood but lacks stipules and prefers much wetter habitats. This shrub, which can attain a height of five metres, flowers in mid-June.

The **Wayfaring Tree** is an introduced species which has escaped cultivation in several locales in the Ottawa District (for example, collected from South Gloucester by A.W. Dugal, from Stony Swamp by Clarence and Enid Frankton and D.F. Brunton, from Britannia by D.F. Brunton). This shrub resembles somewhat the Hobblebush but is taller (up to four to five metres), erect, with all flowers alike. It also prefers more open spaces and its buds and young twigs are densely covered with gray scurfy hairs. Like the Hobblebush, it blooms early and its lower leaf surfaces abound with stellate hairs.

The **Withe-rod** and the **Nannyberry** resemble one another with glabrous or scurfy leaves and twigs. However, a number of features separate them.

The Withe-rod has stalked inflorescences and leaves with entire, crenate or wavy-toothed margins. It is a tall shrub (up to four to five metres) which locally prefers acidic soils and bogs, blooming from mid- to late June.

The Nannyberry has sessile (not stalked) inflorescences and sharply and finely serrate leaf margins. It is a tall shrub or small tree (up to 10 metres in height) which in the Ottawa District favours basic and neutral soils. It blooms in late May and early June.

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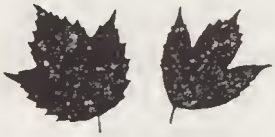
KEY TO THE VIBURNUMS OF THE OTTAWA DISTRICT



1a. **LEAVES WITH THREE LOBES**

2a. Flowers of two kinds, fruit red, underside of leaf without dots and smooth or with few hairs

3a. Leaf stalk glands more or less stalked, mostly convex-topped
.....Highbush-cranberry (*V. trilobum*)

3b. Leaf stalk glands not stalked, concave topped
.....European Cranberry (*V. opulus*)

2b. Flowers alike, fruit black, underside dotted and very hairy
.....Arrow-wood (*V. acerifolium*)

1b. **LEAVES WITHOUT LOBES**

4a. Leaves coarsely toothed

5a. Leaves with stipules*
.....Rafinesque's Arrow-wood
(*V. rafinesquianum*)

5b. Leaves without stipules
.....Southern Arrow-wood
(*V. recognitum*)

* See arrow.

4b. Leaves entire or finely toothed

6a. Leaves hairy

7a. Flowers of two kinds, sprawling shrub, inflorescence not stalked
.....Hobblebush (*V. alnifolium*)

7b. Flowers alike, erect shrub, inflorescence stalked
.....Wayfaring Tree (*V. lantana*)

6b. Leaves glabrous or scurfy*

8a. Inflorescence stalked
.....Withe-rod (*V. cassinoides*)

8b. Inflorescence not stalked
.....Nannyberry (*V. lentago*)

* *scurfy = with scalelike particles*

The Sweet Tooth of Flying Squirrels

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Cottagers are among the select few with the regular opportunity to see and know flying squirrels. As Tony Beck reported recently in *Trail & Landscape* (1986), both *Glaucomys sabrinus* and *G. volans* can be attracted to cottage "bird" feeders in wooded areas in the Ottawa region. At one time, maple syrup producers regularly reported close encounters with flying squirrels as well. Unfortunately, most of these squirrels were dead - drowned and limp in open-topped sap buckets. Once common equipment in sugar bushes, sap buckets acted as reservoirs of sweet food for flying squirrels following long, food-poor winters. A slip into the liquid often meant death by drowning or freezing.

Maple sap is often listed as a food source of both Northern and Southern Flying Squirrels in Canada and the United States, presumably due to the squirrels' discovery in sap buckets. Now that plastic tubing has replaced most bucket operations, mortality in maple sap is rare. But, is the flying squirrel's sweet tooth only directed towards sap buckets? Food habits of both species are basically omnivorous and opportunistic, except in winter. Northern Flying Squirrels are thought to rely more upon fungi and arboreal lichens at that time, while Southern Flying Squirrels depend upon stored caches of hickory, oak and other tree seeds.

Nancy Wells-Gosling, a flying squirrel aficionado, reported seeing Northern Flying Squirrels gnawing for sap in maple trees in the spring (Wells-Gosling 1985), as Red Squirrels are known to do. Two other Michigan biologists, in an intriguing paper documented all species that used or visited selected sapsucker feeding trees in northern lower Michigan (Foster and Tate 1966). While sitting behind blinds, they observed 33 bird species feeding on insects and sap at holes drilled by Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. In late July 1963, they first observed Northern Flying Squirrels visiting the holes. Using flashlights and infra-red scopes, they noted that the squirrels lapped the sap from the holes, licked it from the bark, or even enlarged the holes themselves to increase sap flow. In a review of the literature, they found no reference to Southern Flying Squirrels eating sap.

On the evening of 15 July 1986, Kevin Kavanagh and I were searching for Southern Flying Squirrels along a trail in Backus Woods, a large and fairly mature tract of Carolinian forest in the Regional Municipality of Haldimand - Norfolk, Ontario ($42^{o}40'N$, $80^{o}29'W$). We were using a spotlight with a portable

12 V gel-acid battery to locate the squirrels and/or their orange eye-shine. At about midnight, we encountered one individual flying squirrel feeding on a *Russula* fungus growing out of the trail. It retreated through the foliage of adjacent saplings and drew our attention to another flying squirrel at the base of a mature White Oak. This second squirrel quickly withdrew to the opposite side of the tree when we approached, but it returned within 30 seconds to the moss-covered tree base, now 0.5 m from me (and my camera).

The squirrel commenced moving its incisors in a vigorous vertical motion between elevated striations in the oak bark, and readily lapped up the sap that emerged. Bits of moss and bark were removed from two grooves over a one-hour period, the largest groove being 5 mm wide and 50 mm long.

When the squirrel glanced over its shoulder at us, sap would foam from the groove with an audible hiss that appeared to stimulate the squirrel to greater diligence in its digging. Besides ignoring we human observers, the squirrel also appeared oblivious to the fact that a Barred Owl and a Great Horned Owl were both calling in the vicinity. After an hour's observation, however, Kevin noticed that the squirrel appeared nervous and hesitant in its feeding only when the owls ceased calling and were thus "unlocatable".

Carrion beetles, craneflies, ants, mosquitoes, moths and other insects were also attracted to the oak sap, but were ignored at the time by the flying squirrel. However, moth wings and other insect remains were discovered beneath the groove the following morning. The Michigan observers noted that the Northern Flying Squirrel preyed heavily on the numerous moths attracted to the sapsucker holes. Much like sapsuckers, flying squirrels will use sap holes or tree wounds for a dual purpose - as a source of both energy-rich sap and protein-rich insects.

In compiling the literature records and observations for a status report on the Southern Flying Squirrel (Stabb 1987), I realized that "sugared" trees used for moth collecting in the summer were a potential source of observations. Moth collectors spread sticky mixtures of water, sugar, molasses, even beer on tree bark to attract moths, and inadvertently entice flying squirrels to feed on the sweet material and some prize moth specimens. Squirrels are often tame at these times and can occasionally be captured.

Field biologists and naturalists may be able to take advantage of the flying squirrel's sweet tooth to help determine whether the elusive night gliders exist in a given forest stand. Baiting an area with some (very) sweet material may bring the squirrels out into the open, for observation and species confirmation. Tony Beck (1986) published useful photographs to aid in this endeavour. A couple of hours just after sunset over a few

nights may be all that is needed, although more effort may be necessary. Such observations would be especially interesting from the Ottawa region. The Northern and Southern Flying Squirrels are supposedly sympatric in the area, with the southern species reaching its northern limit in local forests. Studies of micro-distribution may help determine to what extent these species actually cohabit forests and potentially compete for resources such as food and tree cavities.

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Call for Nominations for OFNC Council

A Nominating Committee has been chosen by the Council to nominate persons for election to offices and membership of the Council for the year 1989, as required by the constitution.

We would like to remind Club members that they also may nominate candidates as officers and other members of the Council. Such nominations require the signatures of the nominator and seconder and a statement of willingness to serve in the specified position by the nominee. Nominations should be sent to the Nominating Committee, The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, Box 3264, Postal Station C, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4J5, to arrive no later than November 15, 1988.

The Committee will also consider any suggestions for nominees which members wish to submit to it by November 15th. It would be helpful if some relevant background on the proposed nominees were provided along with the suggested names. ¤

Fall Robins

Robins in fall
ascend leafless boughs
with slow, fluttering flight
move hesitantly
across our lawn;
none of that
brightly-coloured, bold
hopping and stopping
in search of worms, gone
the bright, pealing songtime.

Their colours
suit their mood and match
the fallen leaves;
they hop lightly to
our shallow pool
demurely taking turns
bathing quietly, more slowly
than Robins should.

Their new white eye-rings
seem a kind of customs stamp
to speed them across borders
as they journey
down the continent.

In each fall
when Robins leave
the land is still -
their going measures out
the year and marks
earth's turning...
their return is as certain
as the stars.

Robert W. Nero

Spring Bird Sightings

V. Bernard Ladouceur

March - May Period

Every year, the routine is the same. Late in February, you dutifully trek out to look at the Northern Hawk-Owl (or whatever the rare bird is that has been present since November) for the fourteenth time because you can't think of anything else to do. Hawk-Owls are a lot more interesting than red-wings, robins and grackles most of the time, but not in early March.

You phone up the Bird Status Line and hear reports of various birds returning. "It's spring!", you think to yourself, and this prompts you to step outside. Hoping to have your ears filled, you are greeted by silence, or, if you're lucky (?), the chirping of House Sparrows. You could choose to be amused by your foolish expectations, but in early March your sense of humour has hit an annual low.

A similar process occurs later in spring. By now, Red-winged Blackbirds are once again far less interesting than hawk-owls - if you can find one. You don't think about either species anyway, because you are anticipating that first big wave of warblers. Two weeks of yellow-rumps and the occasional Pine Warblers pass, and one morning you see your first Black-and-white, Cape May and Black-throated Green Warblers. But you want more.

It's the middle of May, the supposed peak of spring migration. A dozen species in Britannia would have thrilled you two weeks ago, but it doesn't today because your expectations are so high. You meet a birding buddy who follows his "I haven't seen much either" with the fateful words, "but you should've been here yesterday!" It's at this point that you realize that you have just missed spring migration in Ottawa - again.

... and now for the details ...

MARCH

One of our Northern Hawk-Owls (at Limebank and Rideau Roads) did linger into March, at least until March 24th. The Varied Thrush in Aylmer was present until at least March 17th. The *tundrius* race Peregrine Falcon seen on the Coats Building on and off throughout the winter continued to be seen through the spring period. Our second record of Tufted Titmouse was seen in Navan as late as March 28th. Which way did it go after that, north or south?

Two Hoary Redpolls were seen on March 5th. One was spotted among a thousand plus Common Redpolls along Fallowfield Road. The other along Albion Road had been present since January and was seen a week later. Common Redpoll numbers dropped drastically in mid-April, as did the already much smaller numbers of White-winged Crossbills. Red Crossbill numbers increased at this time, and this species was reported throughout the period.

Two Ring-billed Gulls were seen on March 5th, and about 50 were present at Nepean Bay the next day. There was no late February/early March heat wave; therefore, there were no early-wave Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and so forth, nor were there any unusually early reports of waterfowl.

A check of Bear Brook near Carlsbad Springs on March 25th turned up virtually nothing. The next day, March 26th, was perhaps one of the better birding days in Ottawa history, quantitatively speaking. There were 5,000 Canada Geese at Bear Brook, 25,000 - 30,000 at Bourget, and 50,000 at Riceville. (For directions to these places, see Trail & Landscape 21(2): 88-92 (1987).) In addition, there were 45 Snow Geese (including five blue phase), three adult White-fronted Geese (*frontalis* race), 5,000 Northern Pintails, Mallards, American Black Ducks, 30 American Wigeons, Green-winged Teals, 20 Wood Ducks, 25 Ring-necked Ducks, two Gadwalls, 150 (!) Rough-legged Hawks, 50 (!) Northern Harriers, 30 American Kestrels, a Short-eared Owl (at Riceville), a Snowy Owl, two Tree Swallows, a Vesper Sparrow, and 6,000 (!) Snow Buntings!!!

At Bourget the next day, March 27th, there were 111 Snow Geese (including 12 blue phase) and two Short-eared Owls.

APRIL

The following (fortunately long) weekend was very good, too. On April 1st and 2nd there were 8,000 Canada Geese at Bear Brook. At Bourget and Riceville there were 70,000 on April 1st and about 100,000 on April 2nd. Also at Bourget were 130 Snow Geese (about 10 blue phase), five Snowy Owls and a Loggerhead Shrike. There were only 14 Snow Geese the next day, and there were five Canvasback. On April 4th, there was another Logger-

head Shrike, an adult Greater White-fronted Goose (*frontalis*) and a possible Ruff.

At Bear Brook there were 13 Snow Geese on April 1st and eight on April 2nd (with a few blue phase both days). Two different immature "blue geese" were observed on April 1st, one at Bear Brook and the other at Riceville. They had a white area behind the bill à la White-fronted Goose. (There was a white eye-ring present in each case.) Therefore, a goose with a white front isn't necessarily a White-fronted Goose.

Highlights of April 7th included 10,000 Northern Pintails (at all three locations) and 13 Snow Geese (eight white and five blue phase) at Bear Brook.

Other birds seen during this period included four Horned Grebes and two Redheads at Deschênes (March 31st), and an American Coot (April 1st), 15 Gadwall, Northern Shoveler (April 2nd), and as many as five Barrow's Goldeneyes at Shirleys Bay.

Late March and early April were quite good for finding owls in Clyde Woods, with Northern Saw-whet and Long-eared Owls being located a number of times. As good as Clyde Woods has been for owls in the past, there had never been a Boreal Owl found there. We suspected that this was the year to find one, and on April 4th persistence paid off. As a matter of fact, a Boreal Owl, a Northern Saw-whet Owl and a Long-eared Owl could all be observed within 15 minutes. Definitely a red letter day and quite a long weekend.

Twelve adult Black-crowned Night Herons were seen flying over Clyde Woods on April 5th.

The rest of April was fairly uneventful. There were reports of adult Peregrine Falcons in at least two plumages from the Coats Building in mid-April.

A Northern Mockingbird was seen near Parc Brébeuf on April 23rd and 24th. Both a single male and a pair of Red-breasted Mergansers were seen between Deschênes and Shirleys Bay from late April to early May. Ruddy Ducks were to be found at Casselman sewage lagoons as has been the case for the last few years.

The real action was taking place just outside the Ottawa District at Plaisance. A male Yellow-headed Blackbird and a male Eurasian Wigeon were found on April 30th. The blackbird was there on May 1st as was a Common Teal (conspecific with Green-winged Teal). A different Yellow-headed Blackbird was found on May 2nd, and during this time a very early Brant was observed. Finally, on April 7th, there was a Barnacle Goose.

Most birders would not count Common Teal and Barnacle Goose

on their lists. Most would count Eurasian Wigeon. It should be pointed out that the vast majority of Eurasian Wigeon reports in Ottawa fall between April 19th and 25th, and this fits into a pattern with other Ontario reports. But, where are these birds coming from? As far as I know, there is no breeding record for North America.

Speaking of counting and not counting, there are no "countable" Ringnecked Pheasants in Ottawa. The original introduced stock has been extirpated.

MAY

May was slow for the most part, but it ended with a bang.

A sub-adult Red-throated Loon was to be found off Lemieux Island for a couple of weeks in early May.

A sub-adult Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen at Nepean Dump on May 7th and 9th. A first-winter Glaucous Gull and no fewer than four Iceland Gulls could be seen here well into May. At times there were some Great Black-backed Gulls (although more reports came from the Ottawa River - almost all first-year birds). A first-winter Thayer's Gull was at the dump on May 23rd.

No Whimbrels, no scoters, few Oldsquaws and few Brant were reported, possibly due to nice weather and lack of coverage.

Bonaparte's Gulls were very scarce. No Little Gulls, jaegers or Franklin's Gulls (even in June), although Arctic Terns and Caspian Terns put in June appearances.

On May 8th there was an adult Greenland race (*flavirostris*) Greater White-fronted Goose (where did it come from?) and an adult Sandhill Crane near Bear Brook at Carlsbad Springs. The Sandhill Crane was undoubtedly one of the birds that would be confirmed breeding in June.

The arrival of land birds was unspectacular as it has been for most of the decade. Seemingly ideal conditions the morning of May 12th produced but 11 species and low numbers. I made repeated trips to Vincent Massey Park during the second week of May and was hard pressed to find three warbler species. On May 14th there was both a singing male Prairie Warbler at Vincent Massey Park and a Yellow-throated Vireo at Hog's Back. It was fairly easy to find 20 species of warblers on the May 14 - 15 weekend. Still, most species were represented by one to four individuals. On May 23rd there were no fewer than 24 species of warblers (no Palm Warbler, which migrates earlier). This number included a fairly late Parula Warbler along Grandview Road and both Golden-winged and Orange-crowned Warblers at Britannia.

Britannia was quite good that morning, but it was very quiet walking out of the Richmond Fen. A number of birders have remarked on how quiet Richmond Fen is in the mornings. Richmond mornings today sound like Richmond evenings ten years ago. It's been years since we've had a good spring migration in Ottawa, and it's been years since there has been a really good spring at Point Pelee. I don't see how we can keep saying that the lack of birds is due to lack of appropriate weather conditions. I think there are fewer birds.

Shorebird migration started off slowly. Actually, it was the birders who started off slowly. It wasn't until mid-May that we discovered that one of the lagoons at Almonte was being drained. Red-necked Phalarope, a number of Short-billed Dowitchers, Dunlin and Black-bellied Plover were found shortly thereafter.

It wasn't until May 23rd that we discovered that Embrun sewage lagoons were going to be the spring mega-spot. The habitat was fantastic. What did we miss?! There were Wilson's Phalaropes, Dunlin, two Short-billed Dowitchers and hundreds of peeps, including a White-rumped Sandpiper on May 23rd. More was to follow.

Possible breeding species included Yellow-throated Vireo at Poltimore and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Huntley Town Line (confirmed breeding), Lac Leamy and Hallville. A Carolina Wren was located on May 20th near North Gower, but no sound evidence of breeding could be found.

The House Finch population has taken another quantum leap from the previous year. A birder from ten years ago would have a hard time believing that this is the same city, as many neighbourhoods have numerous pairs of nesting House Finches, Pine Siskins and Northern Cardinals. The House Finch was first recorded in Ottawa in 1977.

I told you that May ended with a bang. It started on the Spring Census on May 29th when a male Yellow-headed Blackbird was found at Russell sewage lagoons. It appears we're having a mini-invasion of this species. Still, it was the first report within the Ottawa District in two years, and only six birders were able to catch up to it (May 29, 30, 31 and June 2).

On May 30, a singing male Connecticut Warbler was found near Kinburn, and a singing Prairie Warbler was heard near Metcalfe by the same observer on May 31st. The observer's employment at the time consisted of surveying isolated woodlots on private land. If you think you've covered an area thoroughly, think again. One can hear an Ovenbird only from a distance of less than 100 m. There is no way the above birds could have been located from a road. We miss a lot. The Ottawa River acts as a funnel for migrating water birds (as well as others), the

inner city parks force land birds in need of food and rest to be concentrated into a small area, as do winter feeding stations, dumps and sewage lagoons. No such formula exists for detecting breeding species. There's a lot out there that we just can't find.

On May 31st, a Marbled Godwit appeared at Embrun and stayed for over a week. Undoubtedly it came down during the storm the night before. Another Marbled Godwit was found at the St.-Isidore sewage lagoons (just outside the Ottawa District) on June 1st.

No, the hot streak did not continue into June. I'll end there and leave with the next author the fun of discussing simultaneously the breeding season, spring migration (which ends about June 21st) and fall migration (which begins about June 20th).

Acknowledgements: This report was based on the record of the Bird Status Line log supplied by Larry Neily, and the observations of Bob Bracken, Bruce Di Labio, Tony Beck, Peter Dunn, Bob Gorman, Jim Harris, Ray Holland, Brian Penny, Gordon Pringle and Chris Traynor, as well as my own notes. ¤

Book Review: *Enjoying the Birds of the Ottawa Valley*

by John Sankey. 1987. Published by the author. Paperback. 116 pages. $7.95.

This book deals with birding in the Ottawa Valley from Grenville to Deep River. Enthusiastic, instructive, amusing (often frustrating), it is sure to captivate anyone who dips into its pages with even a mild interest in birds. Full marks go to the author for his knack of passing on to the reader his own fascination with the birds of the Valley. Full marks, too, for disseminating the philosophy that merely recognizing a bird by name is just a start at knowing it. More useful bits of birdwatching lore are packed into this small volume than one would have thought possible. Its pages are gem-studded with good suggestions, neat little tips, and perceptive observations - on birdwatchers as well as birds. Laced with philosophy and touches of humour, the book is enjoyable reading, even though crammed with facts, figures, and advice.

The early chapters are designed to help beginners get a start at their new-found interest in birds. Anticipating the

questions and potential blunders of beginners, the book provides basic advice on feeders, bird seed, nesting boxes, pest problems, identifying birds at a feeder, and designing backyard habitat for birds. There is an annotated list of recommended bird books, and excellent advice on how to choose binoculars. There are brief but solidly helpful sections on photographing birds, drawing birds, and recording bird song, with advice from experienced people on equipment and techniques. Included also are suggestions for bird study projects, lists of clubs and organizations for birders, and graphs showing the seasonal probability of seeing each species. To whet the interest of new birders, four actual birding episodes, one for each season, are detailed in essay form.

For newcomers to the Valley, there are good suggestions on where to go for bird walks in the Ottawa area, and what to look for. Two sketch maps outline favourite driving routes for birders, giving the best birding stops along each route. Especially useful is a section describing about 30 different types of Valley habitats, and the kinds of birds to expect in each. A checklist of locations (147 favourite birding spots up and down the Valley, pinpointed on 1:50,000 topographical maps) is alone worth the price of the book. A section on birding from a wheelchair will broaden the horizons of many. Birding by canoe gets skimpy treatment, considering that the Ottawa Valley is prime canoe country. The longest section in the book (how to see 250 different species a year) is directed toward the fanatical birdlister. If this seems to be misplaced emphasis, this section is filled with good suggestions for improving birdwatching skills, whether or not one is a compulsive lister.

A frustrating book? There are many places where the thoughtful reader is left not knowing whether he is being given scientific theory, proven fact, or the author's own best conjecture. I, for one, would like to see more indication of where the information came from, but the author has chosen not to provide it. One has to be critical, too, of the lack of editing, or failure to follow editorial advice, which has resulted here and there in ridiculous statements. ("*... urban construction projects frequently make all nature moot*". "*This book will make your bird guide feel at home*".) Other strangely worded statements obviously do not say what the author thinks he said. ("*Every shorebird has something unique about its feeding habits, for that is why it survives as a separate species.*") Paradoxically, the author frequently exhibits a genius for communicating a complicated concept clearly and concisely.

It is disappointing that a number of conspicuous flaws were not eliminated before the book went to press. It is still the best birding bargain in the Valley, however, a distillation of the birdwatching skills of some of the Valley's top birders.

Sheila C. Thomson ¤

A Guide to Photographing Birds

Tony Beck

Everyone appreciates nature at one time or another. The toughest personality can be awe-struck by some form of nature's majestic beauty.

Even better than enjoying nature is the feeling one gets from sharing the experience with others. In this modern age, we have the luxury of being able to do this through the photographic medium.

Certainly the most difficult kind of nature photography is that of wildlife. The unpredictable and fleeting habits of animals, birds in particular, have always been a major frustration for all naturalists. This is overcome by knowing your subject.

If you wish to capture your subjects photographically, it helps to understand how your subject will register on film. Learn how your camera equipment functions, what features it has, and what its limitations are. So, if you want to be successful at bird photography, you must learn how to get close to the bird, and you should have complete control over your camera.

In my opinion, a good bird photograph is one that gives you some idea of what bird has been photographed. This means there must be enough detail in the image to reveal field marks that identify the bird. Aside from having a good exposure, you must fill the frame with as much of the bird as possible. Even with a long telephoto lens, though, it seems you just can't get close enough.

The easiest way to get close is to find birds that will tolerate your presence and allow you to approach them. Bird feeders and city parks have many birds that seem to enjoy human company because our handouts are their source of daily nutrition. Chickadees, ducks, Rock Doves, and so forth, will come very close, especially when bribed with seeds or tasty morsels of food. Other places are zoos or animal rehabilitation centres. These are places where animals are in constant contact with man. Although not by choice, they have learned to accept man's presence.

If you want your photographs to appear in natural surroundings, the above situations can pose some problems. I would recommend that you pay close attention to background and open up your aperture to decrease depth of field. The more the background remains out of focus the better. Avoid distracting or unnatural images from appearing in the frame.

Professional photographers use these circumstances constantly. You can get good natural photos without spending the time or money. Some pros will not even admit they take advantage of these situations, leaving audiences thinking of exotic wilderness rather than a few props set up in a large cage.

Not all birds are found in these simple situations, but, fortunately, not all birds are shy. Some of our feathered friends don't understand or will not believe that man is a threat to their existence. It also seems that each species has individuals with their own personalities, and some birds are just plain brave and fearless. Because of this, there will be times you will stumble across a bird that will be oblivious to your presence. What a horrible time to be without a camera!

Most of my best work has come from chance encounters. These fortuitous sightings will almost always appear in natural surroundings and will certainly add excitment to the day. Awareness is the key. Practice is essential.

Similar to the above chance sightings are agitated birds or birds protecting young. The same techniques apply, but please be respectful of your subjects. No photograph is worth an abandoned or exposed nest.

Of course, there are some very photogenic birds that simply avoid man. I have no reason to blame them, but that doesn't help your photography much. It takes a resourceful and patient person to get photos here.

First, you must study your subject so you can predict its actions. Feeding or nesting are the two most common photo circumstances in this style of photography. Choose a bird. Learn to predict its actions. Set up your equipment to focus on the area of action. Hide while you survey the area. Wait for the bird. Wait for the best moment. Press the shutter. Voilà!

Actually, this is one of the most difficult methods of bird photography. It requires a lot of time and hard work. High power flash units and large format cameras are expensive and hard to operate in the field, and tampering with nest sites could be detrimental to the birds' breeding success. So I strongly recommend you leave this type of bird photography to the professionals.

Some of my best work has come from using my car as a blind. Most animals do not understand that cars can be a threat. I've been able to approach many a bird by just driving up to it, poking my lens out the window, and snapping a few frames. Be prepared to respond quickly.

One way of getting a bird closer is by fooling its own instincts into an approach. You can do this by imitating an

animal's distress call. There are two variants to this call that I'm aware of. First is "squeaking" by sucking on your forehand in order to imitate a high-pitched squeal of an animal being attacked by a predator.

The other is "pishing". A continuous Pishshsh sound that's supposed to represent an anxiety cry by an anonymous bird toward a predator. It attracts other birds that will attempt to mob and confuse the predator.

Many birds will allow themselves to be approached by automobiles. This roadside Common Snipe shows its lack of concern.

Both techniques take energy and practice. Most of our local bird walk leaders know these techniques. Don't be afraid to ask them to teach you.

One final way of closing the bird gap is by playing commercial cassettes of owl calls or of a bird's own voice. Owl calls, particularly Screech Owl for the Ottawa area, will trigger the mobbing instinct in nearby passerines. They will fly out and start scolding your tape recorder. Playing a singing male's own voice, especially during breeding season, will initiate a defensive territorial response from an aggressive male counterpart.

Now that you know how to get close to birds, the next step is to capture them on film. Rather than go through pages of technical data, I'll just touch on a few camera basics related especially to birds. I will assume that all readers have a 35 mm camera and a telephoto lens.

The single most difficult problem to overcome in photography is getting the right exposure. This comes with matching the right shutter speed with the right lens opening (aperture) in order to allow the correct amount of reflected light from your subject onto the film plane.

Under average photographic conditions, the meter inside your camera will tell you the right combinations to use based on what film sensitivity (ASA/ISO) you set on the camera. Check your ISO dial each time you load a new roll.

Your camera meter will show you one of two ways to make a correct exposure combination. It will show the aperture required based on a pre-set shutter speed or the shutter speed required based on a pre-set aperture. Check your owner's manual to see which type you have.

Automatic cameras will set the stop as the meter tells it to. Modern program cameras automatically set both aperature and shutter speed into a combination it thinks is best for the lens and light situation. Some new expensive cameras have multi-metering systems. Older cameras have no meter, therefore requiring no batteries.

My advice is "the simpler the better". Don't waste your money on features you don't need. Learn to use what you have.

My first camera was a program model. I allowed the camera to make all my decisions for me. Today, I use only the manual settings. I tell the camera what to do. I have more control with a manual camera than a new camera with all the bells and whistles.

Agitated birds such as this Gray Catbird may get very close. Learn to work quickly but smoothly with subjects in motion.

This White-crowned Sparrow was photographed, not by a streamside in the deep northern wilderness, but at a zoo.

First of all, a meter is set to a world-wide standard of what the average photographic situation reflects. But, in the dynamic world of wildlife, you very rarely have an average situation.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when setting your camera.

In bright sunlight, forget about your meter and go the *f16 rule*. It runs as follows. Under bright sunlight conditions, set your aperture dial on f16, your shutter speed will be a fraction of the film speed in use. For example, if you use ISO 125 film, your shutter speed will be 1/125th at an aperture of f16. Of course, any combination allowing the same exposure will work. For ISO 125 film, f22 at 1/60th, f16 at 1/125th, f11 at 1/250th, f8 at 1/500th, and so on.

One more thing to watch out for. If your subject is white, such as a Snowy Owl or an Ivory Gull (Wow!), you must underexpose by one stop or change the rule to f22. For example, with ISO 125, your exposure will be 1/125th at f22.

Now, all of the above is okay on a sunny day, but what about cloudy ones? The varying degrees of cloud density will affect the amount of light falling on your subject. This makes correct exposure difficult to predict. In order to determine correct exposure, you must take a meter reading off a "mid-tone density".

For example, you have a Great Blue Heron flying low against the clouds while you are standing in the parking lot of Andrew Haydon Park. If you were to take this photo on automatic exposure, you would end up with a photo of a dark bird against a deep gray sky. What should be done is to take a meter reading from the parking lot asphalt or the green lawn, both quite abundant in any park. Set your camera to the aperture/shutter combination based on this reading and then fire away. Make sure that the bird is in the same light as the area from which you get your meter reading. So remember that green grass, pavement, even tree bark will give you a reading the same as the average standard in the photo industry.

You can carry an average tone with you if you want. It's called the 18% Gray Card. A commercially available cardboard card with one side a mid-tone gray, it should fit conveniently into your camera bag. Take a reading off this card and you will have the correct exposure of anything in the same light.

Another way is to buy a separate meter to the one in your camera. This hand-held meter should have a diffuser which can cover the light-sensitive element. This type of meter (incident light meter) will tell you the exposure for the light falling on your subject rather than reflected from your subject. It

This Red-tailed Hawk would have been underexposed using automatic features. All photographs from slides by the author.

will be the same as the average standard. Remember to take your reading in the same light as your subject.

In order to save precious seconds, try to predict the light situation that your next photo will take place in and set your camera accordingly. In bright sunlight, remember the f16 rule, and in cloudy or variable skies, take meter readings on a regular basis and pre-set your camera each time.

100 to 200 mm lenses are easy to operate, but with these lenses you have to get very close. 300 to 500 mm lenses are the next best, and probably the lenses most often used for wildlife. Good ones are heavy, expensive, and a little more difficult to use in the field, but you will find it easier to keep a safe distance from your subject. Start saving your nickels and dimes if you're serious. No wildlife photography kit is complete without one of these longer lenses.

In order to prevent camera shake (and get crisp, sharp photos), keep the shutter faster than the focal length. In other words, if you're using a 200 mm lens, a faster shutter speed is 1/250th of a second. The rule of thumb is: for hand-held cameras, keep the shutter speed at a fraction of the focal length or faster. More examples are as follows: 50 mm =

1/60th; 100 mm = 1/125th; 400 mm = 1/500th, and so forth.

Use a tripod when you can, especially when situations require you to set slower shutter speeds. Even with a tripod, try to keep those shutters as fast as possible. Most birds move about very quickly, and fast shutters will stop them cold, resulting in razor-sharp photos. By opening up your aperture, you can keep the shutter faster than when you close it down. You will lose some depth of field, but it's better to have a little in sharp focus than none. Focussing carefully always helps.

Something I use a lot is a gun stock support. It allows me to brace myself and steady by aim. It does not replace a tripod for steadiness, but because of its smaller bulk, it allows me much more freedom to respond quickly as a photo opportunity arises. When using the gun stock, always keep the shutter speed/focal length rule in mind. If you are forced to use slower speeds, you might want to brace the camera and gun stock against any nearby additional support such as a rock or tree.

When focussing on a bird, concentrate on the eyes. This is your prime focussing area. If the eyes are sharp and clear, everything else falls into place. A bird's head in focus with the rest of the body out of focus can still make for an effective photograph. A body in focus with a blurry head just doesn't seem to work.

While composing a photo, many people instinctively put their subject in the centre. This may give you a good static portrait of your model, but your photograph could give more sense of action resulting in greater impact if you position your subject off centre and more toward one side or another. Have your subject looking into the empty space of the frame. This space should be filled with habitat. The final result will be an impression of your subject moving through its natural surroundings - truly a more vivid portrayal of wildlife than a bird smack dab in the middle of a frame.

It would be impossible to cover everything in bird photography in one small article, so I will stop here and make one final recommendation. Go out and practise. Don't be afraid to go through many rolls. The quantity of film you use should be your least consideration. Study all your results, your failures as well as your prize winners. Your bad photos can tell you a great deal about what to avoid the next time you're out.

If you have any questions whatsoever about photography, please feel free to give me a call at (613) 224-1683, or drop me a line at 170 Oakridge Blvd., Nepean, Ontario K2G 2V2.

The best of luck with your bird photography.

Recommended Reading

Shaw, John. 1984. The nature photographer's complete guide to professional field techniques. Amphoto Publishing, New York.

The Wildlife Photograher's Tools

From left to right are

light meter, 70-210 mm zoom lens, 28 mm wide angle lens, 2x teleconverter, 35-80 mm zoom lens, a well-padded camera bag, 400 mm telephoto lens with camera mounted on a gunstock support, tape, lens cleaner, lots of flim, and binoculars.

Mounted on the tripod are 35 mm camera with 200 mm macro lens, motor drive and electronic flash, all triggered by cable release.

Photocan/Tony Beck ¤

Seventh Annual Christmas Bird Count Roundup 1987-1988 Period

Bruce and Astrid Di Labio

You've got that feeling of anticipation. The Christmas Bird Count is here finally. The endless telephone calls, all the planning, is all behind you. At this time tomorrow you hope to be relaxing after a successful day. After a restless night you arise early, ready for action. First, though, a quick check out the window. If you were compiling the Ottawa-Hull Count, you probably felt like going back to bed. On the other hand, for the Dunrobin-Beckenridge Count, it was payoff time.

The Ottawa-Hull Count was held on December 20th, 1987. To say the weather was miserable is to be generous. With the rain, snow and freezing rain, 85 field observers and 52 feeder watchers managed to record a meagre 63 species. The highlights included two Harlequin Ducks, five Barrow's Goldeneyes, one Peregrine Falcon (adult), 44 Glaucous Gulls, 510 Great Black-backed Gulls, one Winter Wren, one Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler, and 86 House Finches. The count was compiled by Allan Cameron.

The Pakenham-Arnprior Count was held on December 26th, with 33 field observers and 4 feeder watchers. They totalled a respectable 49 species. One new bird for the count was found, a Pied-billed Grebe along the Mississippi River at Pakenham. Other birds of interest were one Bald Eagle, 51 Rough-legged Hawks, seven Snowy Owls, one Barred Owl, two Black-backed Woodpeckers, 181 Red-breasted Nuthatches, one Eastern Meadowlark, and 24 House Finches.

Special thanks are extended to Arnie and Martha Simpson, who for the past six years have organized the Carleton Place Count. This year, the count was held on December 27th under the new leadership of Mike Jaques. Twenty-seven field observers and 46 feeder watchers recorded forty-six species, the second highest total ever for this count. Two new species were added, Iceland Gull and Great Black-backed Gull, bringing the total number of species recorded since 1951 to 53. Other noteworthy species included 135 Herring Gulls, 1,921 Bohemian Waxwings, one Northern Flicker, one Brown Thrasher, one Chipping Sparrow, and 10 Common Grackles.

The Dunrobin-Breckenridge Count was held on January 3rd, 1988. A record-shattering total of 63 species was recorded,

eclipsing the old mark by 11 species. Amazingly, 32 records were set or tied. Seven new species were recorded, bringing the all-time total to 80 species. A combination of fine weather and dedicated observers was responsible for this excellent effort. Highlights included one Common Snipe, two Northern Hawk-Owls, one Belted Kingfisher, one Carolina Wren, one Varied Thrush and one Swamp Sparrow. There were 41 field observers and 7 feeder watchers.

Acknowledgements: We wish to thank all the compilers and section leaders for their efforts in compiling the results and getting them to us, and the members of The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, Le Club des ornithologues de l'Outaouais and the Macnamara Field Naturalists' Club for their support.

The following were present at the compilation of the Dunrobin-Breckenridge Christmas Bird Count on January 3, 1988:
back row (left to right): Paul Martin, Richard Poulin, John Dubois, Paul Martin, Chris Ellington, Bruce Di Labio, Simon Gawn and Jack Horner;
centre row (left to right): Rosalind Chaundy, Bernie Ladouceur, Tony Beck, Michelle Elder and Chris Traynor;
front row (left to right): Kai Millyard, Ray Holland and Doug Semple.
Photograph from a slide by Bruce Di Labio.

Species	Ottawa-Hull	Pakenham-Arnprior	Carleton Place	Dunrobin-Breckenridge
Pied-billed Grebe	-	1**	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	4*	-	-	-
Canada Goose	2	-	-	3
American Black Duck	469	-	-	128
Mallard	236	-	7*	19
Black/Mallard hybrid	13	-	-	-
Lesser Scaup	-	-	-	1**
Harlequin	2*	-	-	-
Common Goldeneye	478	22*	27	1
Barrow's Goldeneye	5*	-	-	-
Bufflehead	1	-	-	-
Hooded Merganser	43	-	-	1***
Common Merganser	65	7*	13	-
Red-breasted Merganser	6	-	-	-
Bald Eagle	-	1	-	-
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	2	-	1
Northern Goshawk	-	-	3	3
Red-tailed Hawk	3	16	11*	30*
Rough-legged Hawk	6	51*	10*	31*
Buteo sp.	1	-	-	-
American Kestrel	12	10*	2	17*
Peregrine Falcon	1***	-	-	-
Gray Partridge	32	83*	-	-
Ring-necked Pheasant	2#	-	-	-
Ruffed Grouse	23	33	23	62*
Common Snipe	-	-	-	1**
Herring Gull	2,596*	-	135*	1
Iceland Gull	15***	-	2**	-
Glaucous Gull	44*	-	-	-
Great Black-backed Gull	510*	-	4**	1***
Rock Dove	2,666	1,148*	746	676
Mourning Dove	99	74	73*	31*
Eastern Screech-Owl	-	-	-	1***
Great Horned Owl	2	6	1	53*
Snowy Owl	-	7*	-	6*
Northern Hawk-Owl	-	-	-	2*
Barred Owl	2	1***	-	4*
Northern Saw-whet Owl	-	-	-	2*
Belted Kingfisher	-	-	-	1**
Downy Woodpecker	69	66	63	66
Hairy Woodpecker	64	62	76	110
Black-backed Woodpecker	1	2	-	2
Northern Flicker	-	-	1	-
Pileated Woodpecker	10	13	5	23
Horned Lark	-	4	-	4
Blue Jay	151	317	332	363*
American Crow	372	186*	173	276*
Common Raven	4	12	1	29
Black-capped Chickadee	1,575	1,084*	644	1,705
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	24	181*	5	105*
White-breasted Nuthatch	132	83	72	108

* *record high*
** *new species for the count (therefore also record high for that species)*
*** *ties record high.*
\# *exotics*

1987-1988 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT ROUNDUP (continued)

Species	Ottawa-Hull	Pakenham-Arnprior	Carleton Place	Dunrobin-Breckenridge
Brown Creeper	15	21	3	19
Carolina Wren	1	-	-	1**
Winter Wren	1	-	-	-
Golden-crowned Kinglet	9	27	2	18
American Robin	9	1	-	1
Varied Thrush	-	-	-	1**
Brown Thrasher	-	-	1	-
Bohemian Waxwing	413	636	1,921*	1,165*
Cedar Waxwing	-	-	3	13*
Northern Shrike	7	9	13*	25*
European Starling	1,885	245	360	215
Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	-	-	-
Northern Cardinal	61	-	12	13*
American Tree Sparrow	95	47	129	194
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	1	-
Song Sparrow	1	1	-	3*
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	-	1**
White-throated Sparrow	4	1	-	-
White-crowned Sparrow	1	-	-	-
Dark-eyed Junco	47	1	34	23
Lapland Longspur	-	3	-	-
Snow Bunting	864	870	608	1,631
Red-winged Blackbird	4	-	-	-
Eastern Meadowlark	-	1	-	-
Rusty Blackbird	-	-	-	1***
Common Grackle	1	-	10*	-
Brown-headed Cowbird	-	3	1	-
Pine Grosbeak	28	36	1	161
Purple Finch	7	3	15	10
House Finch	86*	24*	2	1**
Red Crossbill	-	-	-	3*
White-winged Crossbill	5	8	-	1
Common Redpoll	137	147	122	171
Pine Siskin	321	178	154	328
American Goldfinch	672	160	289	326*
Evening Grosbeak	972	2,047*	2,100*	1,931*
House Sparrow	1,767	873	645	571

* *record high*
** *new species for the count (therefore also record high for that species)*
*** *ties record high.*

	Ottawa-Hull	Pakenham-Arnprior	Carleton Place	Dunrobin-Breckenridge
Total Individuals	17,117	8,814	8,855*	10,696
Total Species	63	49	46	63*

SUMMARY: TOTALS FOR THE LAST FOUR YEARS

	1984-1985	1985-1986	1986-1987	1987-1988
Total Individuals	47,550	59,251	46,300	45,482
Total Species	97	75	84	87

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Needed: Field Guides and Nature Books

If you have any field guides or other useful books on natural history that you are not using and would like to give to the Macoun Field Club, telephone the Club number (733-3050) for further information.

Call for Nominations for OFNC Awards

Nominations for the annual OFNC Awards and for Honorary Members must be in the hands of the Awards Committee by December 15 to give enough time for the Committee to make recommendations to the Council early in the new year. Accordingly, the Committee asks all members considering a nomination to send it in as soon as possible.

The last time the Club awards were described in *Trail & Landscape* was a long time ago (in 1981 and 1982), and several changes have occurred since. To update the awards and to remind members of their criteria, they are listed below.

HONORARY MEMBER - in recognition of contributions in a marked degree to the successful working of the Club, or of an outstanding contribution to Canadian natural history, generally over a period of years. (Open also to non-members; up to four offered in a given year, to a maximum of 25 at any one time).

MEMBER OF THE YEAR - to the member judged to have contributed the most to the Club in the previous year. (Members of the Executive are excluded from consideration.)

SERVICE AWARD - in recognition of a member (or members) who has (have) contributed significantly to the smooth running of the Club over several years. (Members of the Executive are excluded from consideration.)

CONSERVATION AWARD - in recognition of a recent outstanding contribution by a member (or group of members) in the cause of conservation.

ANNE HANES NATURAL HISTORY AWARD - in recognition of an outstanding contribution to our knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the natural history of the Ottawa Valley.

The Club awards are relatively new, going back only to 1981, but have already served magnificently as an opportunity for the Club to say "thank you" to some of those members and individuals who have contributed (and continue to contribute) so much. (The 1987 award winners are featured in the last issue of *Trail & Landscape*.) They become even more significant when large numbers of the members become involved in the selection process. Please feel free to offer your thoughts and suggestions at any time.

Send your nominations to: Awards Committee, The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, Box 3264, Postal Station C, Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4J5. ¤

Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions and Lectures Committee
For further information, call the Club number (722-3050).

Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.

ALL OUTINGS: *Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and the activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.*

EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM: *Club members must show their membership cards to gain access to the National Museum of Natural Sciences for Club functions after regular Museum hours.*

Sunday
2 Oct.
9:00 a.m.

AUTUMN COLOURS BUS TRIP
Leaders: Aileen Mason and Ellaine Dickson
Meet: front entrance, Supreme Court Building, Wellington Street.
Cost: $8.00 (See Bus Registration details.)
Enjoy a scenic ride through the Outaouais region on the way to the Forest Educative Centre at Lac-la-Blanche. There will be some emphasis on tree identification along the trail system. Crisp air, a leisurely pace and the splendour of autumn leaves will be the order of the day. The bus will return to Ottawa by 4 p.m. Bring a lunch and dress warmly.

Tuesday
11 Oct.
8:00 p.m.

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF THE VENEZUELAN JUNGLE
Speaker: Monty Brigham
Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.
Long-time Club members Monty Brigham and Roger Foxall spent three weeks this past winter in the heart of the Venezuelan jungle, primarily to view and record on tape the rich birdlife. Experience an extravaganza of nature sounds complemented by magnificent slides of the lush tropical vegetation and Monty's expert commentary.

Sunday 23 Oct. 10:00 a.m.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL JOINT OUTING WITH THE OTTAWA RIDEAU TRAIL CLUB: GENERAL INTEREST WALK IN THE MARLBOROUGH FOREST

Meet: parking lot at the corner of Albert and Booth Streets.

Participants will ramble along a relatively flat portion of the Rideau Trail passing through lovely woodlands and open areas. Bring a lunch to enjoy around the open fireplace at a designated shelter along the route. For further information, call Eileen Evans (741-0789).

Saturday 29 Oct. 8:00 a.m.

BIRDING IN THE WEST END (PART II)

Leader: Roy John

Meet: Britannia Drive-In Theatre, Carling Avenue.

Ducks and fall migrants will be the focus of this half-day trip to several birding locales in the west end of the city.

Saturday 5 Nov. 9:00 a.m.

RAMBLE IN GATINEAU PARK

Leader: Philip Martin

Meet: parking area at the front entrance of the Supreme Court Building on Wellington Street

This will be an all-day general outing to discover interesting aspects of the fall woodlands as nature prepares for the onset of the winter season. There may be a particular emphasis on fungi, fruits, nuts and seeds, so bring a hand lens if you have one.

Tuesday 8 Nov. 8:00 p.m.

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING

THE F.O.N.: PROTECTING TOMORROW'S ENVIRONMENT TODAY

Speaker: Ian Kirkham

Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets

Ian Kirkham is the Executive Director of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. His lecture will focus on environmental programs and issues that the organization is involved with and various directions it may take in the future. The illustrated talk will be complemented with examples of FON-produced materials used for educational activities pertaining to nature conservation in Ontario.

Saturday 19 Nov. 9:00 a.m.

GENERAL INTEREST WALK IN BELLS CORNERS

Leaders: Robina Bennett and Ellaine Dickson

Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria, northeast corner of the parking lot, Richmond Road and Assaly Road.

A full-day trip spent wandering the nature trails

behind Bell High School in the extreme northern sector of the Stony Swamp Conservation Area. The pace will be leisurely, permitting the sighting of many items of interest to naturalists.

Saturday 3 Dec. 8:00 a.m.

LATE FALL AND EARLY WINTER BIRDS
Leader: Tony Beck (224-1683)
Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Carling Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue

Participants on this half-day trip will visit several local areas in search of late fall stragglers and some of the more fascinating birds found in the Ottawa District during the winter months.

Thursday 8 Dec. 7:30 p.m.

TOUR OF THE ORNITHOLOGY SECTION OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCES
Leader: Henri Ouellet

Take advantage of this invitation to view the various components of the national bird collection. The collection comprises bird skins, specimens in fluid, skeletons, nests and eggs. You may also examine the distribution charts and extensive records that have been the product of research conducted on the premises and in the field. Dr. Ouellet is Curator of the Ornithology Section, Zoology Division, at the National Museum of Natural Sciences. This outing is limited to the first 15 people to register by telephoning the Club number (722-3050). Meeting place is 2379 Holly Lane.

Tuesday 13 Dec. 8:00 p.m.

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
RARE BIRDS OF THE OTTAWA DISTRICT
Speakers: Tony Beck and Gordon Pringle
Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets

The observation and reporting of rare birds has provided an exciting dimension to the history of ornithology in the Ottawa area. Since 1980, the Bird Records Subcommittee has been charged with the responsibility of soliciting and evaluating such records that are ultimately deposited in the Club's permanent collection at the Public Archives. Tony and Gordon are highly active within the local birding community and are both members of the Club's Birds Committee, Gordon as Committee Chairman. In addition, Gordon is the Secretary of the Bird Records Subcommittee. Together they will present an overview of some of the more interesting rare bird records accompanied by the corresponding photographic documentation wherever possible.

Sunday 18 Dec.

THE OTTAWA-HULL NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Participation fee: $4.00 per count

Compilation Meeting: after the count at the National Museum of Natural Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets. Coffee and cookies will be served.

To participate, telephone Marg Benson at 744-6045, evenings until 10 p.m.

Final results of this count can be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the compiler, Allan Cameron, 48 Third Avenue, Ottawa K1S 2J8.

OTHER OTTAWA AREA COUNTS

Count	Date	Compiler
Pakenham - Arnprior	December 26	Michael Runtz (1-623-6975)
Carleton Place	December 31	Mike Jaques (1-257-4105)
Dunrobin - Breckenridge	January 1	Bruce Di Labio (729-6267)

Tuesday 10 Jan. 8:00 p.m.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Meet: Auditorium, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets.

This will be the 110th Annual Business Meeting of The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club. At the conclusion of official business, members of the Club's various committees will be on hand to answer questions regarding Club policies and activities. Light refreshments will be served.

Saturday 14 Jan. 10:00 a.m. to noon

TOUR OF THE CARLETON UNIVERSITY GREENHOUSES (ELBA)

Leaders: Henk Datema and Bill Illman

Meet: at the greenhouses; parking is available in Lot #3 across from the greenhouses in the southeast section of the campus opposite the Administration Building.

Enjoy a popular escape from winter highlighted by a wide range of colourful and intriguing plants representing many different habitats around the world.

Saturday 28 Jan. 8:00 a.m.

WINTER BIRDING TRIP TO THE CORNWALL AREA
Leader: Bruce Di Labio (729-6267)
Meet: Sears, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Carling Avenue at Woodroffe Avenue.
Participants will visit the Cornwall Dump and both the Canadian and American sides of the Moses - Saunders Power Dam in search of interesting gulls, raptors and over-wintering waterfowl. Please bring proof of citizenship for entry into the United States. To register and learn further details, telephone the leader.

* * * * *

SPRING EXCURSION TO POINT PELEE

The Club is planning another four-day bus tour to coincide with the peak of spring migration at this world-renowned birding hot-spot. The trip is tentatively scheduled for the second weekend in May (Thursday to Sunday inclusive), but only if there is a sufficient early response. Those interested should contact the Club number (722-3050) as soon as possible.

* * * * *

THE OTTAWA DUCK CLUB

presents its

TWELFTH ANNUAL WILDLIFE ART SHOW AND SALE

prints - paintings - carvings

Friday 21 October 5 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Saturday 22 October 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Sunday 23 October 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

at the Nepean Sportsplex

Admission $1.00

Come early for the best selection!

DEADLINE: Material intended for the January - March issue must be in the Editor's hands before October 1st.

ISSN 0041-0748

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

published by

THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

Second Class Mail - Registration Number 2777
Postage paid in cash at Ottawa

Change of Address Notices and undeliverable Copies:
Box 3264 Postal Station C, Ottawa, Ont.
K1Y 4J5
Return postage guaranteed

Printed by
LOMOR PRINTERS LTD.